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WASHINGTON-Dr. Richard D. Land, Vice Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, and Commissioner Nina Shea will participate in a press conference hosted by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS), Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), and Rep. Diane Watson (D-CA) regarding China's complicity in human rights violations in multiple countries. The press conference will include the participation of Senate Republican Whip Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and other Members of Congress, North Korean defectors, and a range of human rights organizations. A joint Congressional letter to People's Republic of China President Hu Jintao, which calls on China to stop its forcible repatriation of North Korean refugees, will also be presented.

Commission Vice Chair Land and Commissioner Shea will discuss the Commission's new report, *A Prison Without Bars: Refugee and Defector Testimonies of Severe Violations of Freedom of Religion or Belief in North Korea*, which offers evidence of the grave situation facing North Korean asylum seekers who have been forcibly repatriated from China back to North Korea. As Commission Chair Michael Cromartie noted during the April 15 release of the report, "repatriated North Koreans face severe persecution, including harsh interrogations, long-term imprisonment, and torture if they are found to have converted to Christianity or had contact with South Korean Christians or churches while in China." These crimes against repatriated asylum seekers are ongoing, despite China's insistence to the contrary. Conditions along the China-North Korea border are also uniquely hazardous for North Korean refugees, as North Korean security agents target refugees believed to have visited Chinese churches for food aid or other forms of immediate assistance.

The press conference will take place at Senate Russell Park, at the corner of Constitution and Delaware Aves NE, on Thursday, May 1st at 11 am.

**The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and the Congress.

**Michael C.**

**Richard D.**

**Felice D. C.**

**Shea • Am**